

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

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R 121130Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2134

INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MADRID 4062

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFRO, PBOR, SP, MO, SS

SUBJ: VIABILITY OF INDEPENDENT SPANISH SAHARA

REF: STATE 122006

1. SUMMARY. INDEPENDENT SAHARA STATE WOULD FACE NEAR TOTAL LACK OF TRAINED INDIGENOUS MANPOWER TO ADMINISTER GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC SERVICES, ARMED FORCES OR VITAL PHOSPHATE INDUSTRIES. SIZABLE ANTICIPATED EARNINGS FROM PHOSPHATE EXPORTS, HOWEVER, WOULD ASSURE ECONOMIC VIABILITY AND PERMIT SAHARAN STATE TO IMPORT AND PAY SKILLED TECHNICIANS AND ADMINISTRATORS. SECURITY QUESTION IS KEY UNKNOWN IN ASSESSING SAHARA'S VIABILITY. SHARAN STATE WOULD BE VIRTUALLY DEFENSELESS AGAINST BIGGER, STRONGER NEIGHBORS AND, ONCE SPANISH FORCES WERE WITHDRAWN, ITS SECURITY WOULD DEPEND ON EITHER GUARANTEES BY INTERESTED PARTIES OR EMERGENCE OF EFFECTIVE COUNTERVAILING BALANCE BETWEEN TWO STRONGER RIVAL NEIGHBOR STATES, ALGERIA AND MOROCCO. END SUMMARY.

2. A MAJOR CONSIDERATION IN ASSESSING VIABILITY OF INDEPENDENT
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SAHARA IS NEAR TOTAL LACK OF TRAINED TECHNICIANS AND

ADMINISTRATORS FOR GOVERNMENT, PUBLIC SERVICES, ARMED FORCES AND POLICE AND PHOSPHATES INDUSTRY. THIS SITUATION UNLIKELY TO BE REMEDIED BY MODEST TRAINING PROGRAMS NOW IN EFFECT IN BRIEF TIME SPAIN EXPECTED TO REMAIN IN CONTROL OF TERRITORY.

3. WITHOUT GOING INTO EXTENSIVE STATISTICAL MANPOWER STUDY, SINCE INFORMATION SCARCE IN ANY EVENT, BELIEVE FOLLOWING INDICATIVE OF MAGNITUDE OF PROBLEM OF SCARCE SKILLS:

A. EDUCATION:

SHARA, WITH ESTIMATED NATIVE RESIDENT POPULATION OF 70 THOUSAND, HAS TWO SECONDARY SCHOOLS AT ROUGHLY JUNIOR HIGH LEVEL, TWO TRADE SCHOOLS, AND 137 PRIMARY SCHOOLS. NON-EUROPEAN STUDENTS TOTAL ABOUT 2500, OF WHICH ONLY ABOUT 250 - 300 ABOVE PRIMARY LEVEL. ESTIMATED 100 TO 200 SAHARANS ATTEND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN CANARIES OR ON SPANISH MAINLAND.

1973 STATISTICS SHOWED ONLY 60 NON-EUROPEAN TEACHERS IN SCHOOL SYSTEM, MOST OF WHOM TEACH KORANIC SUBJECTS. SOME THIRTY TO FORTY SAHARANS ENROLLED IN UNIVERSITIES IN SPAIN UNDER GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIPS, BUT MAJORITY ARE IN SUB-PROFESSIONAL COURSES SUCH AS SECRETARIAL, OFFICE MANAGEMENT, MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING AIDES. ONLY ABOUT TEN TO FIFTEEN SAHARAN STUDENTS NOW STUDYING PROFESSIONAL COURSES SUCH AS LAW, ECONOMICS AND MEDICINE.

B. MEDICINE:

SAHARA HAS TWO PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND SCORE OF SMALLER DISPENSARIES, BUT NO SAHARAN DOCTORS OR TRAINED NURSES.

C. ARMED FORCES:

NOMAD REGIMENT, WITH TOTAL STRENGTH OF ABOUT 1200, IS CONTROLLED BY SPANISH ARMY, HAS NO SAHARAN OFFICERS ALTHOUGH ABOUT FIFTY PERCENT OF NCO BILLETS HELD BY SAHARANS. AT LEAST 200 SAHARANS REPLACED BY SPANISH CONSCRIPTS AFTER DEFECTION BY TWO PLATOONS OF F POLISARIO SAHARAN ADHERENTS IN MID-MAY. TERRITORIAL POLICE HAVE SIX SAHARAN OFFICERS, CONFIDENTIAL

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ALL RECENTLY PROMOTED FROM RANKS TO SUBALTERN LEVEL. NEARLY ALL NCO'S ARE SAHARANS.

D. PHOSPHATE INDUSTRY:

THE BU CRAA COMPANY HAS TRAINED AT LEAST 200 SAHARAN MECHANICS INCLUDING ELECTRICIANS AND WELDERS. HOWEVER, ONLY TWO SAHARANS HAVE REACHED EVEN MIDDLE LEVEL MANAGEMENT POSITIONS

AND ARE STILL IN UNDERSTUDY ROLES.

E. GOVERNMENT:

PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ESSENTIALLY ADMINISTERED BY SPANISH MILITARY, THOUGH DELIVERATIVE BODIES SUCH AS TERRITORIAL ASSEMBLY (YEMAA) AND MUNICIPAL COUNCILS CONSIST OF SAHARANS, SOME OF WHOM REPRESENT SAHARA IN CORTES IN MADRID. JUDGES IN NATIVE ISLAMIC COURT SYSTEM ARE ENTIRELY SAHARAN. HIGHEST RANKING SAHARAN CIVIL ADMINISTRATOR APPEARS TO BE SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO GOVERNOR GENERAL. WATER SYSTEM, ELECTRIC POWER STATIONS, TELEPHONE SYSTEM AND AIRPORT ARE ADMINISTERED AND MAINTAINED BY EUROPEANS, EITHER SPANISH ARMY OR PRIVATE ENTREPRENEURS, WITH SAHARANS HOLDING MENIAL POSITIONS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MADRID 4062

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F. ECONOMIC BASE:

SPANISH SAHARA HAS TWO IMPORTANT INDUSTRIES - FISHING AND PHOSPHATES, WITH THE LATTER THE FAR MORE IMPORTANT. SPANISH ARE GENERALLY CONFIDENT THAT PHOSPHATE EARNINGS ALONE WILL MAKE NEW STATE ECONOMICALLY VIABLE. BU CRAA MINE, A \$200 MILLION INI INVESTMENT, HAS SOME 1.7 BILLION TONS OF PHOS-

PHATE ROCK RESERVES WHICH WOULD MAINTAIN PLANNED 10 MILLION TON PER ANNUM OUTPUT FOR 150 YEARS. PRODUCTION FOR 1974 AMOUNTED TO 2.3 MILLION TONS WITH 1.6 MILLION SHIPPED TO SPAIN AND 561,000 TONS EXPORTED TO OTHER COUNTRIES AT AN AVERAGE PRICE OF \$31 PER TON (TOTAL VALUE \$17.4 MILLION).

G. SECURITY:

IF SPANISH TROOPS WITHDRAW AS PLEDGED, INDEPENDENT SAHARA WOULD FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES BE DEFENSELESS AGAINST ALGERIAN AND MOROCCAN NEIGHBORS. ITS SECURITY WOULD HAVE TO DEPEND ON EFFECTIVE GUARANTEES BY ITS POWERFUL NEIGHBORS. IDEALLY SUCH GUARANTEES WOULD BE NEEDED FROM BOTH ALGERIA AND MOROCCO. MAURITANIA MIGHT ALSO BE A GUARANTOR FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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POLITICAL REASONS, AND UNDER SOME CONCEIVABLE CIRCUMSTANCE SPAIN MIGHT BE A FOURTH GUARANTOR. WHILE WE BELIEVE SPANISH HAVE LOST INTEREST IN EARLIER PROPOSAL TO KEEP SOME TROOPS IN SAHARA AFTER INDEPENDENCE, WE DO NOT RULE OUT CONTINUED SPANISH ROLE IN SAHARAN SECURITY FORCES THROUGH DETAIL OF SPANISH VOLUNTEERS OR RETIRED OFFICERS AND NCO'S TO TECHNICAL AND COMMAND POSITIONS IN SAHARAN CONSTABULARY AFTER INDEPENDENCE.

4. SPANISH THEMSELVES HAVE GIVEN CONSIDERABLE THOUGHT TO PROSPECTS FOR VIABLE INDEPENDENT SAHARAN STATE. WHILE THEY RECOGNIZE MANY DEFICIENCIES, THEY HAVE POINTED OUT THAT SAHARA WOULD BE NO LESS VIABLE THAN NUMBER OF OTHER NEW STATES THAT HAVE SMALL POPULATIONS, LIMITED RESOURCE BASE, AND NEAR TOTAL ABSENCE OF TRAINED MANPOWER. FREQUENTLY, PARALLEL IS DRAWN BETWEEN SAHARAN STATE AND KUWAIT OR ABU DHABI OR OTHER OIL-RICH PERSIAN GULF MINI-STATES, SINCE SPANISH BELIEVE SAHARA'S PHOSPHATE EARNINGS WILL ENABLE IT TO IMPORT TRAINED MANPOWER SUCH AS PALESTINIANS, EGYPTIANS OR PAKISTANIS, OR TO CONTINUE USING SPANISH TECHNICIANS, UNTIL CADRE OF SAHARANS HAS BEEN TRAINED TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SERVICES. THEY EVEN FORESEE ROLE FOR TRAINED ALGERIANS AND MOROCCANS IN ADMINISTERING INDEPENDENT SAHARA.

5. ON BALANCE, WE CONSIDER THAT LACK OF TRAINED MANPOWER COULD EFFECTIVELY BE MADE UP FROM OUTSIDE SOURCES. HOWEVER, AT LEAST AT OUTSET SPANISH TECHNICIANS WOULD BE EXPECTED TO HOLD LION'S SHARE OF KEY POSITIONS, AS DID FRENCH IN MAURITANIA. QUESTION IS WHETHER SUCH SIZABLE PRESENCE OF SPANISH TECHNICIANS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO ULTRA-NATIONALIST SAHARAN GROUPS LIKELY TO INHERIT POWER AFTER INDEPENDENCE, AND TO OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES. SIMILARLY, ECONOMIC VIABILITY WOULD DEPEND ON EXTENT SAHARAN GOVERNMENT PERMITTED PHOSPHATE ENTERPRISE TO CON-

TINUE FUNCTIONING PROFITABLY UNDER EXPERIENCED FOREIGN MANAGERS.

6. BASIC UNKNOWN REGARDING SAHARA'S VIABILITY, HOWEVER, REMAINS SECURITY QUESTION. PROGRESS IN DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION LIKELY TO BE MEANINGLESS UNLESS NEIGHBORS AGREE TO RESPECT SAHARA'S INDEPENDENCE OR UNLESS
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SOME EFFECTIVE COUNTERVAILING BALANCE OF POWER EMERGES BETWEEN TWO MAJOR STRONGEST NEIGHBORING RIVALS, ALGERIA AND MOROCCO.
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